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Published in:
East European Politics and Societies

DOI:
10.1177/0888325408327847

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East European Politics and Societies 2009 23: 146
DOI: 10.1177/0888325408327847

East European Politics and Societies
Volume 23 Number 2
Spring 2009 146-164

10.1177/0888325408327847
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Opposition to Civil Rights for Legal Migrants in Central and Eastern Europe

Cross-national Comparisons and Explanations

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We set out to answer three questions: (a) to what extent do (former) EU candidate countries differ from Western European countries regarding opposition to civil rights for legal migrants? (b) to what extent do the (former) EU candidate countries differ among themselves in terms of this particular anti-immigrant sentiment, that is, opposition to civil rights for legal migrants? and (c) to what extent can we explain such cross-national differences, considering cross-national demographic or economic conditions, taking into account individual differences? We found that former EU candidate countries were really on comparable levels as EU member states in terms of opposition to civil rights for legal migrants. We found rather strong differences with countries like Estonia, Latvia and Hungary standing out, whereas countries like Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Turkey showed low levels. We found that these differences were (rather strongly) explained by the migrant stock in the country. Although none of the other national characteristics turned out to reach significance, their parameters were in the direction we proposed.

Keywords: *ethnic exclusionism; civil rights; cross-national research; east versus west*

Introduction and Questions

Resistance to migrants has been high on the public agenda in many Western European countries particularly over the last decades.[1] Based on a cross-national and longitudinal study it has been shown that in many countries there has been a substantial increase in this resistance to migrants in the period between 1988 and 1994 which thereafter leveled off.[2] Less attention has been paid to the resistance to migrants in some of the (former) EU candidate countries,[3] except for some studies

on data that are more than a decade old.[4] Yet a recent overview on racist extremism in Central and East European (CEE) countries supposed that "anti-immigrant sentiments are increasing in CEE countries equalling if not overtaking the situation in the West, as yet without firm and up-dated cross-national empirical evidence."[5]

This recent overview states that such anti-immigrant sentiments seem not to be due to racist extremist parties that have never been a major political force in CEE or to racist extremist organizations. Nor are such sentiments due to subcultures of skinheads and/or hooligans—how difficult it remains to truly compare these validly and reliably due to a lack of data.[6] Considering the fact that all CEE countries have ratified important international conventions, also on minority rights, we suppose that these provide legal frameworks to refrain citizens from these countries from treating their minorities unequally, to some extent. Yet the majorities of these countries may resist (the implementations of) these minority rights. Actually, this overview ascertains that in virtually all countries, elements of the racist extremist discourse have been found in mainstream parties which may have reinforced anti-immigrant sentiments in the public opinion. Considering these arguments ruling out a number of explanations, we will argue that these anti-immigrant sentiments may be due to other national and individual characteristics such as the ones that have been shown to explain anti-immigrant sentiments in Western European countries.[7] This provides us with the possibility of testing theories from which these hypotheses on national characteristics have been derived more thoroughly.

In previous research, many aspects of anti-immigrant sentiments have been focussed at the overarching label of ethnic exclusionism.[8] In this contribution, we will focus on some of these aspects for which rather recently, valid and reliable cross-national data have become available for Western European as well as for (former) EU candidate countries, among which are so many CEE countries. More particularly, we will focus on the *opposition to civil rights for legal migrants* as one of the core issues to indicate the level of equal treatment of minorities by majorities in (former) EU candidate countries. This issue is of particular relevance. Many of these legally administered migrants are entitled to stay in the country and have been granted a number of civil rights, at least formally speaking. However, ordinary people do not discuss civil rights for migrants in formal terms. Opposition to civil rights for these legal migrants implies social exclusion of migrants, which in turn implies social non-integration that may induce interethnic tensions. This issue has become widely disseminated throughout the public and political arenas.

Then, the questions to be addressed are: (a) to what extent do (former) EU candidate countries differ from Western European countries regarding opposition to civil rights for legal migrants? (b) to what extent do the (former) EU candidate countries differ among themselves in terms of this particular anti-immigrant sentiment, that is, opposition to civil rights for legal migrants? (c) to what extent can we explain such cross-national differences, considering cross-national demographic or

economic conditions, taking into account individual differences that have been shown to be relevant for opposition to civil rights for legal migrants?

Theories and Hypotheses

We set out to explicate, first, theories and hypotheses about explanations on the contextual level to explain cross-national differences we expect to find and, second, hypotheses derived from these theories to explain differences at the individual level.

Cross-national Differences

In the early fifties, sociologists focused on societal causes of group conflicts as well as on societal conditions under which these conflicts arise, founding Realistic Conflict Theory[9] claiming that each social system, characterized by competition over scarce resources (material resources, power and status) between social groups, such as ethnic groups, contains catalysts of antagonistic intergroup attitudes. The proposition was added that the dominant group has a sense of claims on these scarce resources over subordinate groups.[10] Next, an analytical distinction between, on the one hand, *actual* competition and, on the other hand, *perceived* competition,[11] using "actual competition" to refer to macro- or meso-level socio-economic conditions such as the availability of scarce resources. Moreover, it was suggested that actual competition may also refer to a micro level, that is, competition between individuals from different ethnic groups that hold similar social positions, for example, work in similar niches of the labor market.[12] Finally, it was proposed that these actual competitive conditions might affect the majorities' perceptions of competition which in turn may induce hostile, unfavorable stances toward these out-groups.[13] This argument was explained in a similar fashion later on,[14] building on a classic study,[15] proposing a relationship between "external threat" and "perceived threat" to explain opposition to racial policies.

This line of theorizing started from the bedrock assumption,[16] that dominant group members distinguish themselves affectively as group members from other subordinate out-groups. This distinction is linked with presumed traits of both the in-group and the out-groups. The latter proposition has been substantiated by a second paradigm, that is, *Social Identity Theory,*[17] according to which individuals have the fundamental need to achieve a positive social identity which induces them to perceive their in-group as superior to ethnic out-groups. Subsequently, they apply favorable characteristics that they perceive among members of the in-group to themselves via mental processes labeled as social identification, and they value out-groups negatively via mechanisms of social contra-identification. We propose that these

processes may intensify under the competitive conditions on which Realistic Conflict Theories focuses. Therefore, we consider Social Identity Theory to be complementary to propositions from Realistic Conflict Theory, which we propose to refer to as *Ethnic Group Conflict Theory,* summarized in a core proposition: Intergroup competition, at an individual as well as at a contextual level, may reinforce the mechanisms of social identification and contra-identification, eventually resulting in ethnic exclusionism. At the contextual level, competition refers to macro-social conditions. At the individual level, competition may be specified in terms of the social conditions of the individual members of ethnic groups.

Ethnic Group Conflict Theory offers a coherent explanation concerning the effects of societal circumstances on exclusionist reactions that can now be rigorously tested across countries that may be quite different in terms of contextual conditions both historically and contemporarily, such as the (former) candidate countries for the EU. The deduction that follows from the theory is that ethnic exclusionism varies with the level of actual competition within countries. We propose that the level of actual competition may be related to conditions where there are (a) increasing numbers of people competing for, ceteris paribus, approximately the same amount of scarce resources or (b) stable numbers of people competing for a decreasing amount of scarce resources. These conditions all imply, ceteris paribus, a stronger competition for scarce resources between the dominant group and ethnic out-groups. Following this rationale, also suggested by previous studies,[18] we propose that *opposition to civil rights for legal migrants will be stronger in countries where the actual level of ethnic competition is relatively high, more particularly in contextual conditions of (1a) a relatively high proportion of resident migrants, (1b) a relatively high level of immigration, (1c) a relatively high number of asylum seekers and (1d) a high unemployment level.* The actual level of available resources may be indicated by the gross domestic product (GDP), and therefore we propose to test that *opposition to civil rights to legal migrants may be high in contextual conditions where (1e) the GDP is relatively low*.

Individual Level Differences: Social Position and Religion

We use Ethnic Group Conflict Theory also to derive hypotheses with regard to the effects of individual characteristics on the opposition to civil rights for legal migrants. We propose that the level of ethnic competition can be expected to vary between social categories. Particularly those social categories that hold similar social positions as ethnic minorities[19] or those social categories that live close to ethnic enclaves[20] may experience higher levels of ethnic competition than average and may therefore deny more strongly civil rights to legal migrants. In many European countries, the overwhelming majority of non-autochthonous residents, immigrants and asylum seekers are located in the lower strata of society, also

very often concentrated in urban areas.[21] This implies that lower-strata members of the European majority population who hold social positions comparable to those of ethnic minorities—that is, those with a low level of education or a low income level, those performing manual labor, those who are unemployed or those who live in urban areas—will have to compete more with immigrants on, for instance, the labor market. Hence, we expect that *(hypothesis 2) opposition to civil rights for legal migrants will be strongly prevalent among social categories of the dominant group in similar social positions as ethnic out-groups, more particularly among (2a) people with a low level of education, (2b) manual workers, (2c) unemployed people, (2d) people with low income and (2e) people living in urban areas.*

As straightforward as these hypotheses may seem, they may not hold at all for these (former) EU candidate countries, following the line of reasoning recently developed.[22] The principal argument is that in countries that suffer from major collective threats (e.g., larger immigrant populations and poor economic conditions), differences between advantaged and disadvantaged groups may dampen, that is, these differences decrease, which boils down to non-significant differences between people from high versus low social classes. First, disadvantaged groups may react with despair rather than hostility toward minorities. Second, disadvantaged groups may perceive their situation to be less severe than for minorities. Third, disadvantaged majority groups may consider some kind of solidarity with minority groups. Yet there may be quite another reason why differences on resistance to minorities between particularly poorly and highly educated people may be small in these countries. The educational systems in these countries were highly centralized systems, with a considerable degree of standardization, to provide as much equality in opportunities for the stability and legitimation of the social order.[23] Many people, socialized in this kind of system, may not have been exposed to the enduring effects that education has been shown to have in so many Western countries[24] where the educational system is the main social institution for the transmission of the "official culture" considered to be enlightened and respectful to minority rights. Therefore, is was argued that such educational effects would be less strong in non- or less democratic systems for which elaborate cross-national evidence was delivered.[25] Based on cross-national data collected in 1995, it was shown that the educational effect on aspects of ethnic exclusionism was less strong in recent democracies (like some of the [former] candidate countries) as compared to educational effects in long-standing democracies. This argument boils down to rejecting hypothesis 2a. Yet it was also proposed that some time lag was necessary to provide means to the "new" educational system to teach the new norms as well as the ones relating to aspects of ethnic exclusionism. This suspicion implies that the effects of education may only come to the surface among young cohorts who have actually gone through the system over the last decade. Therefore, we will additionally test the *hypothesis (3a) that the educational effect is present among the youngest cohort and is different from the educational effect among older cohorts.*

From quite a different perspective, evidence has been provided that religious people were rather prejudiced compared to non-religious people.[26] In previous research which covered 11 European countries among which were some CEE countries, a simple linear relationship was found: the more frequently people attend church, the more exclusionism they display.[27] Therefore, we expect that (*hypothesis 4*) church attendance is negatively related to opposition to civil rights for migrants.

Data

The Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.2 was collected in May 2003, carried out by Gallup Organization Hungary on request of the European Commission, Directorate–General Press and Communication and European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). It covers citizens of each of the 13 countries that are applying for European Union membership. Of them, 10 became members in 2004. Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey were by then still candidate countries. Each target sample was 1,000 interviews, except for Cyprus and Malta, for which the target was 500 interviews. More information is available in Gallup Organization Hungary (2004). The basic sample design applied is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. All interviews were face to face in the respondent's home and in the appropriate national language. In countries with significant minorities the respondents had a chance to respond in their mother tongue (in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in Russian and in Romania in Hungarian). The provided fieldwork control report shows that the response rate varies from 41.4% in Estonia to 64.4% in Latvia. We decided to select only those respondents with the nationality of the respective country which of course differed strongly between countries. Appendix A provides these data.

Measurements

Dependent variables

The Eurobarometer in the candidate countries contained the same questions as the Standard Eurobarometer of the EU member states. The question formulations of the Eurobarometer for the candidate countries and the standard Eurobarometer for the EU member states are identical. We analysed the same set of items as in analyses of the EU member states[28] as to compare the level of different aspects of ethnic exclusionism between Western European countries and (former) candidate countries. We tested whether these items can be regarded as measurement instruments that are cross-nationally comparable, not only across candidate countries but also in comparison with the EU member states. To answer the question whether measurement instruments are equivalent across candidate countries *and* EU member states in

2003, we applied multi-sample analyses upon all 30 samples of the Standard Eurobarometer 59.2 (17 samples in 15 countries, including separate samples of Northern Ireland and Eastern Germany) and the 2003 C*andidate Countries Eurobarometer* data (13 national samples). We concluded that many aspects of ethnic exclusionism were equivalently measured in all candidate countries and member states by the same items. Next to *opposition to civil rights for legal migrants* (e.g., "legally established immigrants: should have the same rights, should have the right to bring immediate family members in, should be able to become naturalised easily"), we ascertained cross-national valid measurements for *resistance to multicultural society* (e.g., "it is (not) a good thing for any society to be made up of people from different races, religions and cultures"), perceptions of *limits to multicultural society* (e.g., "there is a limit to how many people of other races . . . a society can accept"), *favour repatriation policies for legal migrants* (e.g., "legally established immigrants should all be sent back to their country of origin"), *insistence on conformity to the law* (e.g., "in order to be fully accepted members of our society, minority people must give up such parts of their religion and culture").

Independent Variables at the National Level

The national statistical data for the countries included in the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003 are displayed in Appendix B. Figures on the *unemployment rate* in 2002[29] were taken from Eurostat,[30] and they refer to the number of unemployed persons as a share of the total active population. The estimates of the number of unemployed are based on the results of the European Union Labour Force Survey. Unemployed persons are those aged 15 to 74 years not living in collective households who were without work within the two weeks following the reference week and have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks or who found a job to start within a period of at most three months. We applied the unemployment rate in 2002, which is the figure that is prior to the data collection.

Figures on *GDP* were taken from Eurostat[31] (2003b). GDP is measured per head in thousands of Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) at current prices, indexed at 100 for the 15 EU members, in the year 2002. Next, these relative figures were multiplied with the actual GDP per head in thousands for the EU to derive the actual GDP for each country. For Malta, Eurostat did not report GDP figures after 1999. Since Eurostat figures regarding the percentage of non-nationals were available only for a selection of Central and East European Countries, we had to find another indicator for the candidate countries. As an alternative indicator, we applied the size of the *migrant stock* as a percentage of the total population.[32] The latest available figures available before the data collection took place refer to mid-year 2000 and define the migrant stock as the number of people who are born outside the country. For a subset of countries that did not have data on place of birth but had data on citizenship, the estimated number of

non-citizens is given. In both cases, the migrant stock also includes refugees, some of whom may not be foreign-born. For Slovakia and Bulgaria, the migrant stock was estimated by the United Nations Population Division applying a statistical model based on census data classified by place of birth or citizenship.

To take into account the effect of immigration, we took the average annual number of migrants and related it to the total population. For the EU candidate countries only the net migration was available for all countries. We derived the *average annual net migration in the period 1995 to 2000, per 1,000 capita* from the United Nations Population Division (2002).[33] The average annual net migration is the net average annual number of migrants during the period, that is, the annual number of immigrants less the annual number of emigrants, including both citizens and non-citizens.

Finally, we took the *average number of asylum applications in 2001 and 2002 per 1,000 capita* as an additional indicator. Figures regarding the number of asylum applications are quite suitable for international comparison as compared to other figures on asylum seekers, such as the number of admitted refugees. The number of asylum applications in each country is registered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.[34,35] To take into account strong yearly fluctuations, we took the average number of asylum applications in the two years preceding the time of the survey, that is, in 2001 and 2002. To compare the burden of the absolute numbers of asylum applications across countries, we related this to the size of the total population.

Independent Variables at the Individual Level

To measure the first of our independent variables, *educational attainment,* we used information on the age at which respondents had stopped their full-time education. We regarded educational attainment as an interval variable. In order to assign a numerical value for the respondents who were still studying at the time of survey, we took their age. Furthermore, to prevent extreme high scores on the educational attainment variable, we regarded the age of 30 as an upper limit.

A measure of *social class* was constructed, using the available information in these secondary data, to resemble the cross-national comparable categorisation.[36] We distinguished a number of categories, based on their actual social position in the labour force: the higher professionals (including professionals, business proprietors and top management), the lower professionals (middle management), routine non-manual workers (people with an employed position at a desk, in service jobs or travelling), self-employed people (farmers, fishermen and shop owners), supervisors and skilled manual workers and a category of other (unskilled) manual workers and servants. To these classes we added as distinct categories the people who were momentarily not active in the labour force: people working in their own household, students, unemployed people, and lastly, retired people and disabled people.

In the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer dataset, no country-specific income questions were available. Instead, only a harmonised income variable was available

Table 1
Grand Mean Scores on Dimensions of Majority Population's Attitudes

	(Former) EU Candidate Countries		EU Member States	
	Mean	Percentage Support	Mean	Percentage Support
Resistance to multicultural society	.41	28	.37	25
Limits to multicultural society	.56	42	.70	60
Opposition to civil rights for legal migrants	.40	38	.41	39
Favour repatriation policies for legal migrants	.34	19	.35	22
Insistence on conformity to law	.57	45	.78	67

that measures the gross monthly household income in ten deciles. This harmonised income variable is comparable across countries. Missing data for household income were—for each country separately—imputed by an estimated value based on other information that is available for the respondents. We estimated missing income values by means of a regression analysis of household income on seven variables that are related to household income.

Urbanisation was measured by means of three categories ranging from "a rural area or village" or "a small or middle sized town" to "a large town," as judged by the respondent. With regard to *religious denomination,* we distinguished between non-religious people and religious people belonging to Christian or to non-Christian denominations. In addition, *church attendance* was also taken into account, ranging from never attending church, to rarely attending church (a few times a year or less) to frequently attending church (once a week or more). We constructed a dummy variable for those belonging to the youngest cohort (that is, those born after 1976, entering high schools around 1989). Finally, we included *gender* as a control variable in the analysis.

Analyses

First, we calculated the differences between (former) EU candidate countries and EU member state countries regarding the five dimensions of ethnic exclusionism that we distinguished. These are presented in Table 1. Next, we performed multi-level analyses on one particular aspect of ethnic exclusionism, that is, opposition to civil rights for legal migrants. We tested whether it would make sense to use this advanced analysis by estimating the difference in the log likelihood between a model containing only an intercept (individual level variation) with a model containing estimates for random variation at the country level. This clearly provided us with evidence that

Table 2a
Parameter Estimates from Multi-level Models on Opposition to Civil Rights in 13 (Former) Candidate EU Countries; Standard Errors in Parentheses (N = 9,541)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	**0.42 (0.04)**	**0.44 (0.05)**	**0.42 (0.03)**
Individual characteristics			
Education		–0.35^{-2} (0.21^{-2})	–0.35^{2} (0.21^{-2})
Occupation (higher professionals = reference)			
Lower professionals		0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Routine non-manuals		**0.03 (0.01)**	**0.03 (0.01)**
Self-employed people		0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Skilled manuals		**0.04 (0.02)**	**0.04 (0.02)**
Unskilled manuals		**0.06 (0.03)**	**0.06 (0.03)**
Housewives		*0.04 (0.02)*	*0.04 (0.02)*
Students		–0.02 (0.03)	–0.02 (0.03)
Unemployed people		0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Retired people		0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Income		**–0.49^{-2} (0.12^{-2})**	**–0.48^{-2} (0.12^{-2})**
Gender: male (female = reference)		–0.00 (0.01)	–0.00 (0.01)
Urbanisation (rural area or village = reference)			
Small or middle sized town		–0.02 (0.02)	–0.02 (0.02)
Large sized town		–0.01 (0.02)	–0.01 (0.02)
Religion (non-member = reference)		–0.03 (0.02)	–0.03 (0.02)
Church attendance (never = reference)			
Attend frequently		–0.01 (0.02)	–0.01 (0.02)
Attend rarely		–0.00 (0.01)	–0.00 (0.01)
Cohort > 1976		–0.00 (0.02)	–0.00 (0.02)
Cohort × Education		–0.16^{-2} (0.31^{-2})	–0.15^{-2} (0.31^{-2})
Country characteristics			
Unemployment: 2002			–0.00 (0.01)
Gross domestic product per capita: 2002			0.00 (0.02)
Migrant stock: 2000			**0.13^{-1} (0.04^{-1})**
Net migration: 1995-2000			0.01 (0.01)
Asylum applications: 2001-2002			0.05 (0.10)
Variance components			
Individual	0.12	0.12	0.12
(Percentage explained)		(1.27)	(1.27)
Country	0.02	0.02	0.01
(Percentage explained)		(6.53)	(57.79)

Note: Bold parameters indicate significance at $p < .05$; italic parameters indicate significance at $p < .10$.

there are major differences between countries in this respect that will be shown in Graph 1. Next, we included stepwise individual characteristics and country characteristics to find out whether inclusion of these characteristics would improve the model fit, which it turned out to do. Therefore, we will present the results of these

Table 2b
Parameter Estimates from Multi-level Models on the Opposition to Civil Rights in 15 EU Member Countries; Standard Errors in Parentheses (N = 15,096)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	**0.40 (0.02)**	**0.38 (0.02)**	**0.38 (0.02)**
Individual characteristics			
Education		**–0.85^{-2} (0.14^{-2})**	**–0.85^{-2} (0.14^{-2})**
Occupation (higher professionals = reference)			
Lower professionals		0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Routine non-manuals		**0.03 (0.02)**	**0.03 (0.02)**
Self-employed people		**0.05 (0.02)**	**0.05 (0.02)**
Skilled manuals		**0.06 (0.02)**	**0.06 (0.02)**
Unskilled manuals		**0.08 (0.02)**	**0.08 (0.02)**
Housewives		**0.05 (0.02)**	**0.05 (0.02)**
Students		–0.02 (0.02)	–0.02 (0.02)
Unemployed people		**0.06 (0.02)**	**0.07 (0.02)**
Retired people		0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Income		–0.01 (0.01)	–0.01 (0.01)
Age		*6.60^{-4} (0.00)*	*6.60^{-4} (0.00)*
Gender: male (female = reference)		**0.02 (0.01)**	**0.02 (0.01)**
Urbanisation (rural area or village = reference)			
Small or middle sized town		**–0.02 (0.01)**	**–0.02 (0.01)**
Large sized town		**–0.03 (0.01)**	**–0.03 (0.01)**
Country characteristics			
Unemployment: 2002			0.01 (0.01)
GDP: 2002			–0.00 (0.00)
Non-Western non-nationals: percentage in 2000			0.01 (0.01)
Immigration non-EU nationals: 1995-1999			0.02 (0.01)
Asylum applications: 2001-2002			0.01 (0.02)
Variance components			
Individual	0.14	0.13	0.13
(Percentage explained)		(2.34)	(2.34)
Country	0.01	0.01	0.00
(Percentage explained)		(0.00)	(22.67)

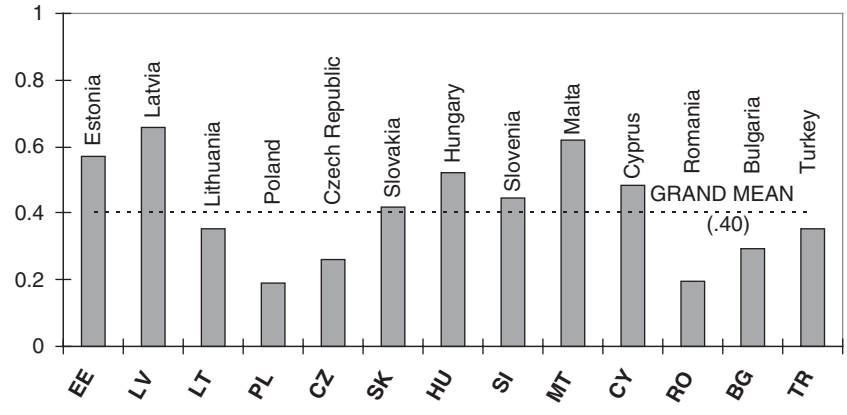
Note: Bold parameters indicate significance at $p < .05$; italic parameters indicate significance at $p < .10$.

analyses in Table 2 to ascertain which national characteristics actually affect opposition to civil rights for legal migrants.

Results

Let us first have a look at the major differences between EU member states and (former) candidate countries on different aspects of ethnic exclusionism. These are presented in Table 1.

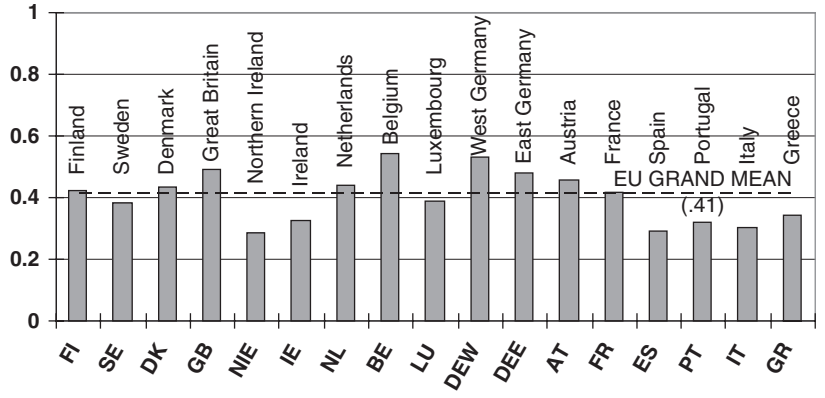
Graph 1
Mean Scores on Opposition to Civil Rights in (Former) EU Candidate Countries



We find that the level of support for some dimensions of ethnic exclusionism is quite similar in (former) candidate countries compared to EU member states. This is particularly true of opposition to civil rights for legal migrants (grand mean = .40 in candidate countries versus .41 in member states) and being in favour of repatriation policies for legal migrants (grand mean = .34 in candidate countries versus .35 in member states) and somewhat less so for resistance to multicultural society (grand mean = .41 in candidate countries versus .37 in member states). These findings imply similar proportions; that is, substantial minorities of the people living in candidate countries and member states share these views. Big differences between member states and candidate countries can be found regarding the view that limits to multicultural society have been reached (grand mean = .56 in candidate countries versus .70 in member states) and regarding the insistence on conformity of migrants to the law (grand mean = .57 in candidate countries versus .78 in member states). These findings imply larger proportions; that is, vast majorities of people living in member states hold the latter views whereas of the people living in candidate countries only a slight majority supports these views. These findings do certainly not support the hypothesis put forward by Mudde (2005) that (former) candidate countries are overtaking the position of Western countries in terms of anti-immigrant sentiments.

Next, we focussed on the opposition to civil rights for legal migrants to find out the differences between (former) candidate countries. These are presented in Graph 1.

Graph 2
Mean Scores on Opposition to Civil Rights in EU Member Countries



We find that this particular aspect of exclusionist stances is strongly supported by people living in Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Malta and Cyprus but also to some extent in Slovakia and Slovenia. Much less support for this view is present in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Turkey.

Now let us consider differences between EU member countries in Graph 2. This figure reveals that this kind of opposition is rather strong in Belgium, followed by Germany (East and West), Great Britain and Austria, whereas Denmark, Finland and France are just above the EU mean. Well below the EU mean are the Mediterranean countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece, but also Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Next, we present the results of the multi-level analyses in Table 2a. Regarding country characteristics, we ascertain a positive statistical effect of the migrants living in the country which suggests that: the more migrants, the more widespread the opposition to the granting of civil rights to them, supporting hypothesis 1a. Additional analyses showed that this positive effect is due to the inclusion of Estonia and Latvia, two countries that have a relatively large migrant stock (defined as non-nationals, in particular Russians) and where the attitude towards granting migrants civil rights is less favourable, as shown in Graph 1. Although the effects of the other contextual characteristics—net migration and asylum applications—do not reach significance, they are in line with the hypotheses we proposed to test. None of the economic country characteristics reach significance—GDP and unemployment

level—implying that we have to refute hypotheses 1b through 1e. Yet a fairly large proportion of the variance at the country level is explained (57.89%).

Now, let us turn to the individual level effects. Actually, we find (still) no significant effect for educational attainment, hence rejecting hypothesis 2a. This finding is at odds with findings about EU member states as well as with our expectation that the educational systems of these (former) EU candidate countries meanwhile would have transformed and become similar institutions like the Western ones, producing enlightened and tolerant people. Additionally, we tested whether the educational effect would be different between younger versus older cohorts. We found that the interaction term (educational attainment with the cohort variable) also did not reach significance, rejecting hypothesis 3a, which implies that this young cohort has not yet enjoyed the enduring effects of education.

Between occupational categories, however, we do ascertain significant differences. People performing unskilled manual work turn out to support this view rather strongly, followed by people performing skilled manual labour and people performing routine non-manual labour. These findings support hypothesis 2b. Although the parameter of the category of housewives does not reach significance (at the .05 level), it indicates that these categories also tend to oppose to civil rights for legal migrants. Strictly speaking, hypothesis 2c is rejected. The effect of income is negative, implying that the higher someone's income, the less he or she opposes civil rights, supporting hypothesis 2d. None of the other individual level characteristics reach significance, which also implies that hypothesis 2e on people living in urbanized areas and hypothesis 4 on church attendance are rejected. The latter finding is at odds with previous research both in eastern and western European countries where it was found that the more people attend church, the more they are prejudiced toward ethnic minorities in their country.[37]

We like to emphasize that these results are predominantly consistent with comparable findings and in some respects strikingly different from the results in EU member states, presented in Table 2b. In EU member states, we found other occupational categories significantly stronger in opposing civil rights for legal migrants than the reference category, like self-employed people and unemployed people. Next, we found gender differences and differences between urbanized people and those living in the countryside, the latter opposing more strongly civil rights. In these countries we found a strongly negative effect of education on opposition to civil rights which is more than often found in this line of research. However, with respect to country characteristics we find no significant effects, although all effects are in line with the proposed hypotheses that as yet have to be refuted for these member states.

Conclusions and Discussion

In this contribution we set out to answer three pressing questions on anti-immigrant sentiments in (former) EU candidate countries. The first one dealt with

the presupposition that the level of these anti-immigrant sentiments would be much stronger in some of these countries as compared to EU member states. However, we found no empirical evidence for this. Instead, in some respects, these (former) candidate countries showed lower levels, like on the view that there are limits to multicultural society and regarding the insistence on conformity to law. These findings should reduce at least some of the political worries that the level of prejudice in East European countries would be detrimental to the consolidation of democracies.[38] Remarkably, in some respects, the level of exclusionism was strikingly similar to that of the EU member states like for supporting repatriation policies and resistance to multicultural society, but also for the opposition to grant civil rights to legal migrants.

We considered the latter aspect of ethnic exclusionism to be crucial and therefore focussed on this issue to answer our second question, that is, on cross-national differences. We found rather strong differences with countries like Estonia, Latvia and Hungary standing out, whereas countries like Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Turkey showed low levels.

To answer our third question, we set out to explain these cross-national differences, taking into account both national and individual level characteristics. We found that these differences were (rather strongly) explained by the migrant stock in the country, particularly high in Estonia and Latvia where so many Russians live. Although none of the other national characteristics turned out to reach significance, their parameters were in the direction we proposed: the level of asylum applications would probably be, at least to some extent, related to the relatively high level of opposition in countries like Slovakia, Slovenia and Cyprus.

In terms of individual level characteristics, we were struck by the finding that educational level (still) had no significant effect on the opposition to civil rights for legal migrants which is certainly at odds with much of the empirical evidence found in Western countries.[39] In so many studies, a strongly negative effect was found, also on this particular aspect of ethnic exclusionism (as shown in Table 2b), implying that highly educated people are more respectful in terms of respecting civil rights for legal migrants as compared to poorly educated people. We also tested whether the educational effect would differ between young versus old cohorts, that is, between old cohorts who were educated during the old regimes as compared to young cohorts who were educated after the institution of new and democratically chosen regimes. We found, however, that such differences are as yet not present.

Apart from these findings, we found strikingly similar social categories opposing civil rights for minority groups, like the people performing (un-)skilled manual work and people with low incomes. Moreover, we found that people performing routine non-manual work also opposed these civil rights. We like to consider these reactions to be consistent with the socio-economic interests of these social classes for which evidence was presented, based on the 1995 ISSP data.[40] However, none of the other social categories that we supposed would oppose civil rights for legal migrants came

to the fore as such. It seems to be that differences between social categories in these (former) candidate countries are somewhat less pronounced than in EU member states. This finding is somewhat similar to previous findings.[41] We like to emphasize that these results overall lend support to vital parts of Ethnic Group Conflict Theory, particularly the hypotheses on the social categories directly competing for scarce resources with legal migrants. However, hypotheses derived from this theory on cross-national differences are not strongly supported, similarly to findings in Western countries. Actually, only the hypothesis on the migrant stock in the countries inducing the level of opposition to civil rights for legal migrants turned out to be supported. These non-significant findings together with the non-significant effect of education may call for other macro or contextual explanations outside of the realm of economic and demographic conditions, particularly on the grand societal institutions with some socializing power like the educational system but also the media via which politicians and public opinion leaders may affect the public opinion indirectly as has been suggested previously[42] and shown previously for extreme right-wing voting in Germany.[43] Then the question becomes whether and to what extent it will be possible to construct cross-national comparable indices on the (longitudinal changes in the) number and substantial messages that are passed through these systems to the majorities in these countries, inducing or reducing intergroup antagonisms. To the extent that such an endeavour may turn out to be fruitful, we will be able to test additional theoretical propositions.

Appendix A

Number of Completed Interviews and Response Rate by Country

	Total Number of Completed Interviews	Response Rate (%)	EU Population Aged 15+ (× 1,000)	Percentage of Respondents with Country's Nationality
Estonia	1,006	41.4	1,360	65.4
Latvia	1,002	64.4	2,345	58.7
Lithuania	1,022	41.6	3,475	86.2
Poland	1,000	45.7	38,632	99.5
Czech Republic	1,000	56.9	10,226	97.4
Slovakia	1,035	52.2	5,331	88.4
Hungary	1,015	48.3	10,195	98.4
Romania	1,018	53.5	22,435	93.5
Bulgaria	1,000	62.0	7,891	90.8
Slovenia	1,000	42.6	1,980	95.0
Malta	500	47.7	386	99.2
Cyprus	500	59.2	689	99.8
Turkey	1,000	46.9	67,803	100.0

Appendix B
Contextual Characteristics of EU Candidate Countries

Country	Unemployment Rate in 2002	GDP per Capita	Migrant Stock in Percentage of Population in 2000[a]	Average Annual Net Migration in 1995–2000, per 1,000 Capita	Average Annual Number of Asylum Applications in 2001 and 2002, per 1,000 Capita
Estonia	9.1	10.03	26.2	–8.0	0.01
Latvia	12.8	8.45	25.3	–2.0	0.01
Lithuania	13.1	9.38	9.2	0.0	0.07
Poland	19.9	9.46	5.4	–0.5	0.12
Czech Republic	7.3	14.38	2.3	1.0	1.41
Slovakia	18.6	11.35	0.6	0.3	1.65
Hungary	5.6	13.58	3.0	–0.7	0.80
Slovenia	6.0	17.71	2.6	0.5	2.22
Malta	7.4	11.93	2.2	1.4	0.60
Cyprus	3.8	17.38	6.3	3.9	2.05
Romania	7.0	5.88	0.4	–0.5	0.08
Bulgaria	18.1	5.93	1.3	–4.9	0.33
Turkey	10.4	5.50	2.3	–0.8	0.07

Notes

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16. See Bobo, "Group Conflict."

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19. See Blalock, *Toward a Theory.*

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